



News Release

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Office of Inspector General
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For Release

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NASA CONTRACTOR ENTERS INTO CIVIL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

On May 10, 2000, Benson P. Lee, President, Technology Management, Inc. ("TMI"), Bratenahl, OH, signed a Release and Settlement Agreement with the United States in connection with a Small Business Innovative Research ("SBIR") contract with NASA. The Release and Settlement Agreement states, that after a 1999 audit, the United States determined it had made an overpayment of \$42,000 to TMI on its SBIR contract with NASA. TMI has denied any wrongdoing. This agreement avoids further litigation and settles the outstanding issues regarding TMI and its NASA contract.

The U.S. Government initiated an investigation of TMI based on allegations that the contractor had submitted false claims on its SBIR contracts with NASA, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Since 1995, TMI has been awarded numerous SBIR contracts to conduct solid oxide fuel cell research for the U.S. Government. The research on the NASA contract involved the use of solid oxide fuel cells as an innovative electric energy storage system for use in space.

This investigation was conducted by Special Agents of the NASA Office of Inspector General, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The civil settlement was handled by James Bickett, Assistant United States Attorney, Northern District of Ohio, Akron, OH, (330) 375-5716.

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